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FOOD PRICE REVIEW

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A summary of the food outlook especially
designed to give maximum advance information
to food editors to help them plan food features.

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service

January 13, 1958
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MEAT: Supplies per person in first half 1958 will probably be as large or slightly larger than year earlier. Although commercial meat production declined 7 percent in final quarter last year, huge 1957 feed crops are stimulating livestock production this winter, as well as increasing farrowing of 1958 spring pigs. With cattle production on cyclical decline, though, total live-stock and meat output this year will show only small increase over 1957.

Beef: Cow slaughter in first half 1957 was above previous year in every month except one, but it will not be as high in that period this year. By spring, though, slaughter of well-finished cattle is expected to be at least equal to 1957 slaughter and probably will be above it.

Pork: Hog producers plan 6 percent increase over last year in 1958 spring farrowings. With average size litter adjusted for trend, the pig crop would total 56 million head, or also up 6 percent.

Lamb: Sharply reduced lamb slaughter last fall makes an increased supply of lambs probable for both breeding and slaughter.

POULTRY:

Broilers & Fryers: Broiler output in 1958 will probably rise above last year's record of about 1.4 billion birds.

Turkeys: December 1 storage stocks stood at nearly 222 million pounds. That is 14 percent above a year earlier and 45 percent more than average for that time.

Eggs: The year began with about 6 percent fewer layers than year earlier. Farm egg output appears likely to be within 2 or 3 percent short of record 61 billion eggs produced in each of last two years. This small cut in production, coupled with population growth, will reduce per capita supplies of eggs this year as much as 5 percent from 360 eggs estimated for 1957. This would be lowest level in 15 years.

DAIRY: Milk production throughout 1958 very likely will continue at record levels. In December farm milk production exceeded record high of previous December by nearly 2 percent.

FRUIT:

Deciduous: The 1958 crop will be somewhat larger than last year's, assuming average or better weather. Decreases appear likely for apples, increases for apricots, sweet cherries, grapes, and peaches. Other fruits not expected to vary much from last year.

Citrus: Total production of citrus fruit in 1957-58 will be sharply smaller than last year, due to December freeze. January 1 estimated output for 1957-58 Early and

Midseason oranges is 61.3 million boxes--about 14 percent below previous season. Valencias are expected to total 48 million boxes--21 percent below last year. Grapefruit prospects are for crop of 40.8 million boxes--9 percent below last year. Florida tangerine output--estimated at 3 million boxes--is down a third from year ago. The early January freeze may further reduce these estimates.

Processed: Total output of dried fruits expected to be considerably below 1956-57 figure. Reductions will be mainly in raisins and dried prunes, which usually account for most of total. Raisin output in 1957 declined about 16 percent from 1956-57 crop of around 200,000 tons. Production of dried prunes totaled 170,800 tons compared with 196,200 in previous year.

Canned: Present prospects for 1957-58 pack point to a total somewhat below record 1956-57 pack of about 3.6 billion pounds. Stocks of 9 fruit items last June 1--latest available inventory date--stood at 18 million cases, or 51 percent greater than year earlier.

Frozen: Total production of frozen fruit and fruit juices last year was probably somewhat larger than the 1956 record pack of around 1.6 billion pounds. That shows continuance of sharp upward trend in output during past decade.

Tree Nuts: With average weather, total output of tree nuts in 1958 will probably be somewhat larger than last year. The 1957 crop of almonds, walnuts, filberts, and pecans was 22 percent below 1956 record.

VEGETABLES:

Fresh: Production of winter vegetables in 1958 was expected on January 1 to be slightly under 1957 output and 3 percent below average. Greatest reductions, compared with last year, are expected in snap beans, carrots, cauliflower, sweet corn, green peppers, and tomatoes. Smaller crops also reported for broccoli, eggplant, Brussels sprouts, and cucumbers. Winter production of cabbage, celery, lettuce, and escarole, promises to be significantly greater than last year. Increased production also expected for artichokes, beets, and shallots. Since January 1 forecasts, adverse weather may have further reduced some crops.

Potatoes: The 1958 crop of winter potatoes, forecast at 5,690,000 hundredweight, is 16 percent below 1957 but 51 percent above 1949-56 average. December 1 potato stocks stood at 108 million hundredweight, almost 10 million hundredweight below a year earlier. High quality potatoes are expected to be available generally.

Processed: Supplies of canned vegetables available into mid-1958 are expected to be a little smaller than high levels of year earlier. Among major canned vegetables tomato juice, and most tomato products expected to be down from heavy supplies of previous season but moderately to substantially above average. Green peas, corn, and snap beans promise to be near record.

Frozen: Stocks of all frozen vegetables on December 1 totaled almost 967 million pounds--62 million pounds below year earlier.

The Plentiful Foods Program

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, through its Plentiful Foods Program, will support industry campaigns on the following commodities, at the following times:

CANNED AND FROZEN PEAS
DRIED PRUNES
CEREAL AND MILK
JUNE DAIRY MONTH

February 1 to March 1, 1958
March 1 to 31, 1958
April 1 to 30, 1958
June 1 to 30, 1958